

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

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1. A document management method which uses a plurality of document schemas to manage a document retrieval request, the document schemas defining a structure of document contents, each document schema including a plurality of attributes, the method comprising the steps of:

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assigning a schema identifier to each of the plurality of document schemas by generating a global unique identifier value every time a schema name of a new document schema is input; and

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assigning an attribute identifier to each of the plurality of attributes of one of the plurality of document schemas by generating another global unique identifier value.

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2. The document management method according to claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

determining whether the attributes of a changed document schema include an attribute ID that is common to a non-changed document schema, through comparison between the attribute

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identifiers of both the changed document schema and the non-changed document schema; and

replacing the attributes of the non-changed document schema with the attributes of the changed document schema having the common attribute identifiers.

3. The document management method according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of document schemas are contained in a document schema file, the document schema file being stored into a first document management system and containing the schema identifier for each of the document schemas and the attribute identifier for each of the attributes of one of the document schemas, and the document schema file capable of being stored into a second document management system.

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4. The document management method according to claim 1, wherein the first assigning step is configured to receive a global unique identifier value as a new schema identifier from an external system via a network and to assign the new schema identifier to one

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of the plurality of document schemas.

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5. The document management method according to claim 1, wherein, when a query condition is input, the document management method carries out a query conversion process for the input query condition, the query conversion process comprising the steps of:

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reading a schema identifier, which corresponds to one of schema names in the query condition, from a related one of the plurality of document schemas; and

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replacing each of the schema names in the query condition with the schema identifier.

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6. The document management method according to claim 1 wherein, when a query condition is input, the document management method carries out a query conversion process for the input query condition, the query conversion process comprising the steps of:

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determining whether one of attribute names included in the query condition is a common attribute shared by the plurality of document schemas; and

replacing the attribute name in the query condition with a string of a corresponding field of a document attribute management table when said one of the attribute names is the common attribute.

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7. A computer readable storage medium storing program code instructions for causing a processor to execute a document management method, the document management method using a plurality of document schemas to manage a document retrieval request, the document schemas defining a structure of document contents, each document schema including a plurality of attributes, comprising:

15 first program code means for causing the processor to assign a schema identifier to each of the plurality of document schemas by generating a global unique identifier value every time a schema name of a new document schema is input; and

20 second program code means for causing the processor to assign an attribute identifier to each of the plurality of attributes of one of the plurality of document schemas by generating another global unique identifier value.

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8. The computer readable storage medium according to claim 7,
further comprising:

third program code means for causing the processor to
determine whether the attributes of a changed document schema
5 include an attribute ID that is common to a non-changed document
schema, through comparison between the attribute identifiers of both
the changed document schema and the non-changed document
schema; and

fourth program code means for causing the processor to
10 replace the attributes of the non-changed document schema with the
attributes of the changed document schema having the common
attribute identifiers.

9. The computer readable storage medium according to claim 7,
wherein the plurality of document schemas are contained in a
document schema file, the document schema file being stored into a
20 first document management system and containing the schema
identifier for each of the document schemas and the attribute
identifier for each of the attributes of one of the document schemas,
and the document schema file capable of being stored into a second
document management system.

10. The computer readable storage medium according to claim
7, wherein the first program code means is configured to cause the
processor to receive a global unique identifier value as a new
schema identifier from an external system via a network and to
5 assign the new schema identifier to one of the plurality of document
schemas.

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